



CIVANO PARCEL QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS – JUNE 2015

This document lists all the questions received during the June 2, 2015 public meeting regarding the sale of City-owned land known as the “Civano Parcel,” and summarizes the staff responses that were provided at that meeting.

Further questions should be directed to the Office of Integrated Planning, 520-791-4675, integrated-planning@tucsonaz.gov.

What is the purpose for selling the plot of land?

The City has planned for more than a decade that a portion of the site be sold and developed, to encourage residential and commercial development in the Houghton Road corridor. The Houghton area has been identified as a designated growth area in both the 2001 and 2014 [General Plans](#), and in the [Houghton Area Master Plan](#).

The City has a portfolio of surplus properties, and this parcel has been identified as one of the most valuable. A sale will bring in one-time funds, but more importantly development will generate tax revenue for public services and infrastructure.

Real estate values are still low. Why not wait to maximize the City's investment?

We consider this to be an appropriate time for the sale given the recent completion of improvements on the adjacent stretch of Houghton Road, and favorable market conditions.

Questions relating to setting aside the whole property for bike trails/open space, or departing significantly from the Master Plan for Fantasy Island Trails Park:

- ***Why not protect and dedicate the whole area [as open space]?***
- ***Why not keep it as it is? Preserve the trails and maintain a buffer zone for DMAFB.***
- ***Fantasy Island is an existing, heavily used, community resource. The southern two square miles is the only beginner-level mountain bike trail without hills in the area. Why is there no plan to save the entire three square miles as a city park?***
- ***Is there any chance of editing the plan to remove the housing on the west side of the parcel? Protect that to mitigate the chance of a state land annexed housing plan.***
- ***Seems like situation has changed. Reassess the decision?***

The City seeks to strike a balance between preserving this valuable recreational and natural asset, encouraging development on Tucson's east side, and generating short- and long-term funds for public services and infrastructure. The proposed sale is guided by the [Master Plan for Fantasy Island Trails Park](#), a conceptual plan for the area created through an extensive and inclusive public process. Given the

thoroughness, community input, and quality of this plan, City staff determined that the best way to move forward with the land sale was to stick as closely to it as possible.

More than two thirds of Fantasy Island trails are on land owned by the Arizona State Land Trust. Currently the only mechanism for protecting state lands from development is through purchase. The primary method that the Tucson community has used to buy and protect open space is through [Pima County bonds](#).

Even though it may promote growth to Tucson, Tucson was just voted the #6 Bike Friendly Community in the U.S. Fantasy Island offers all kinds of skill level trails, not to mention the great location. This is an investment to Tucson. Do you agree?

City leadership and staff wholeheartedly agree that Fantasy Island bike trails are an asset to the community for recreation and tourism-related economic development. This is why the City has agreed to set aside +/- 110 acres of the parcel exclusively for the protection of Fantasy Island, protecting the entirety of the trails system that existed in 2006. Tucson Water and Pima County Regional Wastewater Reclamation District are also providing trails access on their 40 acre property at the southwest corner of the site. In all, trails access will be retained on over half of the City's original 320 acre parcel.

What consideration is being taken for wildlife?

The +/- 110 acres planned to be set aside as open space protects not only Fantasy Island mountain bike trails, but also the majority of the washes that exist on the site. Preserving these washes and adjacent lands will protect the most significant wildlife habitat on the property, and retain corridors for native wildlife to travel across the site.

How long would either plan allow Fantasy Island to remain a trail system before further development?

Once the property is sold, both access to the site and the development timeline would be determined by the property owner. It is reasonable to expect that subsequent to a sale, an 18-24 month rezoning process would need to occur before construction could start.

Going north on Houghton between Valencia and Irvington – at one of the intersections there is already a double left turn cut out which would inevitably turn in to Fantasy Island. Why is there a double left turn already there? What is planned?

On northbound Houghton Road between Valencia and Irvington Roads, there are no dual left turn lanes. There are two single left turn lanes in this stretch, which provide access for motorists seeking to make a u-turn. No turn lanes or access points on the west side of Houghton (between Valencia and Irvington) were designed in anticipation of future development.

What is the approximate revenue generated by cycling in Tucson?

City staff do not have access to this figure.

Name of trails that would be lost?

Christmas Tree Loop and Rez Loop.

Questions relating to access to “Bunny Trails” and Valencia Road:

- ***Will there be any restrictions on more trails being developed in the park? The Bunny trail made the park very welcoming to beginners.***
- ***Is there a connection of the bike trail from Valencia Road through the area, or is that only along the paved path next to Houghton Road?***
- ***Will there be a connection to the “Bunny Trails?”***
- ***What will the access from Valencia to the Fantasy Island trail system be?***

The proposed sale will continue to provide access for riders from the northern portion of Fantasy Island to the Bunny Trails to the south. This will retain connectivity to Valencia Road via mountain bike trail.

How can the public be assured that the new owners will indeed allow/provide access?

The sale of the City’s property will not affect access to Fantasy Island trails from Irvington Road. Also, the City will require as a condition of sale that the property include an easement to provide trail access between the City’s property to the north and Tucson Water/Pima County property to the south (i.e. the connection to the Bunny Trails).

- ***What are the terms of the “condition” that new owners adhere to this obligation? What if they change their mind?***

This access will be preserved legally as a condition of sale, most likely as a public easement on the property.

Questions relating to management of open space and Fantasy Island trails:

- ***Will the land buyer be responsible for/liable for the trails of Fantasy Island?***
- ***Who maintains the trails? Oversight?***
- ***Who will manage the Fantasy Island Trail area?***

The open space portion of the site will be retained under the ownership of the City of Tucson; therefore owners of the other portions will not be responsible or liable for the trails.

The trails were built and are maintained by mountain bicyclists from the community, who use the trails at their own risk. This situation will continue on the portion of the property owned by the City of Tucson.

Plans/knowledge of the state trust land that trails are currently on?

City staff does not have any knowledge of any planned or pending activity on the State Trust lands surrounding the property.

Can you trade land with the state to decrease effect on the trail system?

The State Land Trust cannot trade land with local governments.

If the city sells, why will the state not be encouraged to sell as well. Why is this not the first chink in the armor?

The State Land Trust generally bases sales on market demand and its own internal planning processes. It is not known how this sale could affect that equation; however the City is not in a position to attempt to manage the disposition of state trust lands.

Can you show where on the map the new church is being built in the southwest quadrant?

A church is being built on private property along Valencia Road, more than two miles south of the Civano Parcel.

Who is the purchaser of the land?

City staff will recommend to City Council that the land be offered in an open bid process, in which a minimum bid is set and the land is sold to the party offering the most financial return to the City.

Will the potential buyers be public knowledge?

Yes.

What is the selling price?

A minimum selling price will be set based on an independent appraisal to be conducted this summer.

What is the approximate appraised value of the land to be sold?

The City received a real estate broker's estimate of value in January 2014 for \$5 million for the +/- 165 acres proposed for sale. This is a rough estimate that is now 18 months old; the final value for the sale will be determined in a formal third party appraisal.

Will the appraisal be based on current zoning? If the intent is to rezone, wouldn't that rip off the city?

The land will be appraised based on current zoning, but accounting for the highest and best use for the property.

What are the odds or potential of this land being sold?

The City has received considerable interest in the land from developers, and the City intends to price the property according to fair market value. However, the likelihood of a successful sale is not known.

Can you explain what happens next if we all agree that this is the plan we want to go with, and how this becomes more official rather than conceptual?

City staff will share your input from this meeting and any subsequent public input with the Mayor and Council later in June. If Mayor and Council provide direction to proceed with the sale, staff will conduct the following steps (note: timeline is approximate and subject to change):

- Survey the land and finalize the boundary between City-owned open space and land to be sold
- Have the property appraised
- Offer the land for sale on the City's web site and through a real estate marketing firm (August 2015)
- Return to Mayor and Council with any offers received on the property (December 2015)
- Complete sale (no later than June 2016)

How will land be zoned?

The land will be sold under current zoning, Suburban Ranch (SR), which allows for one house on every four acres. It is expected that the buyer will seek rezoning, which would proceed under the City's standard rezoning process (<http://www.tucsonaz.gov/pdsd/rezoning-special-exceptions-original-city-zoning>) after the sale is completed. The rezoning process requires public hearings before the Zoning Examiner and Mayor and Council, and allows for significant public input.

The property lies within the boundaries of the Houghton Area Master Plan (HAMP, <http://www.tucsonaz.gov/pdsd/hamp-houghton-area-master-plan>), which provides regulatory guidance on land use.

Questions relating to property's relationship with Civano development on the east side of Houghton:

- ***Will the housing and/or mixed use portion of land be a part of the Civano Master Planned Area/Development? It should be!***
- ***Will the housing development follow the Civano Master Plan to include solar? What if the new developers agree to a new MOU?***
- ***How will the Impact standards for Civano be codified with the land sale? Solar requirement?***

Staff is not recommending that the property be sold with any connection to or requirements of the Civano development.

Why wasn't the Ward 4 CDRC [Community Design Review Committee] invited to review this project before this presentation?

The CDRC is an advisory body for the [Houghton Road expansion project](#). City staff determined that this public meeting was the appropriate place to solicit input from all stakeholders.

Is the Harrison Road extension still planned?

The City had formerly planned to extend Harrison Road south of Irvington. This extension is no longer planned.

What is the timeline on the Loop extension through Fantasy Island?

Pima County is extending the multi-use path known as [The Loop](#) on the western boundary of the Fantasy Island area on state trust land between Irvington and Rita Roads. Please contact [Pima County](#) for information on this project.

These types of terrain parks and recreation areas create value for the residents and visitors. Will there be money infused to help improve and maintain the parks and recreation areas from the developers benefitting from the plan?

Development would directly contribute impact fees and construction sales tax to the City.

What needs to happen to stop the sale of this land entirely?

The sale of the property will occur at the direction of Mayor and Council.

As more people lead to an increased need for trails/open space and with other public agencies recently preserving land in the area for tourism revenue, does the city anticipate land having to be purchased in the future? Not if, but when more trails are needed.

It is not likely that the City of Tucson will be in a position to purchase land for open space within the foreseeable future.

Will the sale of this land fix some of the potholes in Tucson?

While the sale proceeds will not likely go directly to road repairs, one intent of the sale is to contribute to the development of an economically healthy community in which infrastructure is well maintained.